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Mayor Eric Adams
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor Adams,

I am writing to share my serious concerns about the recent decision by the city's Legal Department advise denying sound permits to Forest Hills Stadium for their upcoming 2025 season. This decision was made in response to a lawsuit by the Forest Hills Garden Corporation against the New York Police Department, which claims that the NYPD does not have the right to close the Corporation's private streets to allow access to Forest Hills Stadium. Without the proper safety protocols in place, the NYPD is unable to properly permit the concerts at the Stadium.

Forest Hills Stadium is a unique cultural destination that annually draws hundreds of thousands of visitors from around the world, with its operation providing immense local economic benefits to surrounding businesses, creating hundreds of good-paying union jobs and generating critical tax revenues.

Built more than a century ago, this open-air stadium has played host to concerts by some of the biggest names in music history — The Beatles, Frank Sinatra, Jimi Hendrix, Barbara Streisand, Simon & Garfunkel, The Who, Drake, Van Morrison, Bob Dylan, Ed Sheeran, Tom Petty, Dolly Parton, LL Cool J and countless others — while also serving as the home of the U.S. Open for more than 50 years until its move to the Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in 1978. The stadium continues to attract the music industry's most popular stars every year, and just last month was named the best amphitheater on the East Coast by Billboard magazine.

Since the concerts resumed at Forest Hills Stadium in 2013, an agreement has been in place with the Forest Hills Garden Corporation allowing direct access to the venue for patrons walking from the Long Island Rail Road and the nearby 71st Avenue subway station. Under this agreement, the Stadium built a new entrance to their facility at the terminus of Burns street, at great expense, with the understanding that this would support a pedestrian route which would be the most direct, and the least disruptive to residents of the Gardens.

To expect the stadium to cancel their operations, for an indeterminate period of time, and with no clear resolution in sight, would be financially devastating for the concert promotion team, the stadium's hundreds of mostly unionized employees, the countless patrons who made travel plans to see a show and the artists scheduled to perform. But most of all, such a cancellation would economically devastate many nearby restaurants, bars, shops and other establishments who see a surge in patronage on days when events are scheduled at the stadium. The loss of that revenue would undoubtedly put those businesses and the employment of their workers at risk.

While we recognize there naturally are some negative impacts that come with living immediately next door to a major event space, the stadium's promoters have made every attempt to be a good neighbor — going above and

beyond to address community concerns in an effort to balance their operations with important quality of life fixes, such as installing effective soundproofing barriers within the venue.

To allow a minute number of frustrated individuals — representing a small fraction of the local community's population — to shutter one of New York City's most iconic and economically vital concert venues, simply by threatening legal action against the City, would be shortsighted and destructive. The wider Forest Hills community as a whole has been almost universally supportive of the stadium, as seen through last year's petition created by venue's promoters. Of the 25,000 signatures received in support of the stadium, a whopping 76 percent live hail from the zip codes 11375, 11418, and 11415.

I urge you to reconsider this decision, and to pursue alternative solutions which would allow Forest Hills Stadium to move forward with their 2025 concert season.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donovan Richards". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Donovan Richards
President
Borough of Queens